



# The South India CHURCHMAN

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## CONTENTS

	Page
Silence .. .. .	1
Created to be Creative and Contextual .. .. .	2
Health Care in the Context of Self-reliant Development ..	3
Seminar on 'Christian Ecumenism' .. .. .	6
CASA at a Turning Point .. .. .	7
Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Order for Women in the Church of South India, January 2nd, 1977 .. .. .	8
Gramdan: Sarvodaya for Today .. .. .	10
News from the Diocese .. .. .	11
Letter to the Editor .. .. .	11

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# Silence

In the early morning of Republic Day the loud speaker, blared the film songs noisily. In such a cacophony one perhaps could with patience and great effort identify some words here and there. Similarly, a plethora of words through sermons, loud singing and prayers are poured out at the endless conventions, revival meetings and public meetings. The Church committees and Seminars bring out long reports which are examples of verbosity. In all these, the truth of the words in Paul Simon's song, namely,

' people talking without speaking,  
people hearing without listening,  
people writing songs, that voices never shared '

become so true and meaningful.

Silence is as great a gift as speech. The world of today seems to have forgotten or ignored this gift. In the long history of the Church, particularly in its liturgies and devotional practices, silence was given a prominent place. Yet today one hardly ever hears about 'silent retreats.' On festival days we seem to be imitating others by playing records of Christian songs through loud speakers. Silence is the great need of today. To be silent, to reflect and to know God's continuing presence in this world amidst the various noises that surround us is a necessity. Is it possible, particularly during this Lent period, for the Church to rediscover the different aspects of silence?

Individual discipline and observance of personal silence is the starting point. To find time, even perhaps to have fixed periods of silence daily, is still a definite possibility. When a number of young people can pursue their studies with the transistor loudly playing, silence can also be observed amidst the busy activities in a home. Although all cannot be Mahatmas, observing silence, yet certainly a beginning can be made to follow the practice at least for a few minutes.

Another equally important question is as to what to do during such period of silence. We all know by experience how easily different thoughts crowd our minds and how we can so comfortably wander from one subject



to the other. Religious exponents have advised us to take one subject to concentrate and to reflect on that. It may be an aspect of God or a problem faced by humanity or a particular issue that is being confronted. Certainly there are a wide range and a variety of ways of keeping silence. Secondly, there are occasions when Christians gather together in churches or other places. At such times, the period before the beginning of the service provides a good opportunity. We are fortunate to have at least two definite periods of silence during the liturgy of the Lord's Supper. Those leading the service should make it a point to keep at least two to three minutes of silence so as to facilitate the members to encourage them and to guide them to observe silence usefully. Will it be too much to ask to observe to begin with five minutes of silence in an hour of worship? Further, instead of organising (or in addition to) the Lenten services with long sermons and talks, worship with long periods of silence and reflection could be experimented. Silent retreats could also be revived. Lastly, is it possible, for the churches, as far as possible to be silent with regard to their pronouncements or passing resolutions? One may argue that at time the Church to be silent means cowardice. But certainly to make pronouncements and to talk loudly and not to follow them by action is worse. Particularly in the context of the churches having pronounced so loudly it is apt to observe silence and instead of talking further to quietly and efficiently take action on the already spoken words.

People sharing common faith, gathered in silence, can find a deeper fellowship. Lent calls us indeed to be still and silent and to know God who has called us to be His witnesses in this world.

ALEXANDER D. JOHN

# Created to be Creative and Contextual

*(Extracts from the Presidential address to the Diocesan Council meeting of the Diocese in January 1977.)*

We have selected rather an interesting theme for the XVI Session of the Madras Diocesan Council—'CREATED TO BE CREATIVE AND CONTEXTUAL'. The whole theme springs from perhaps what should be our motto 'WAR ON SPIRITUAL FAMINE'. At the last Council we spoke War on famine and this was a war on physical famine and at this Council we want to declare war on spiritual famine. There seems to be a growing spiritual slackness, a growing lack of Biblical knowledge and our prayer life has slackened a great deal. Our Christianity is becoming more and more traditional and a Sunday morning affair. We feel very comfortable with our 1½ hours of worship every Sunday morning. This will not do. At this Council we want to sound a clarion call to spiritual renewal and to spiritual revival in the Diocese of Madras. There should be a concentrated effort towards a spiritual renewal taking place in the life of every individual in the Diocese. We must strain every nerve to work hard and bringing about a real spiritual revival within the life of the church in our Diocese. Without spiritual renewal and a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ we would appear to be empty vessels making a great noise. Spiritual renewal should be a process and we need to constantly think about this work towards this. This renewal should begin with the individual and every individual must be brought to a real commitment to Jesus Christ. Every individual must be 'born again', then every family must be committed to Jesus Christ, then every local congregation must be genuinely a regenerated congregation. The fire of spiritual renewal must spread into the areas and the 4 areas in Madras diocese must be 'aglow with the spirit'. Then the diocese of Madras will have to be all out for Jesus Christ.

For this renewal we begin with the recreation of individuals and the recreation of individuals on to the recreating a new humanity through mission and evangelism and this process of creation and recreation or 'Created to be creative' should be an ongoing process. This will be a war on spiritual famine and this war on spiritual famine must be contextual. The word contextual just means that in our commitment to Jesus Christ and in our trying to inspire this commitment in others we should be indigenous and Indian. We must be honest and frank with ourselves and say that we are far from being contextual, indigenous or Indian. How much of Indianization has taken place in the life of any Church in the diocese of Madras since independence? We should look at ourselves very critically and with more openness to change. I do realize that many people find it difficult to change, find it difficult to be more Indian, find it difficult to get rid of some of our Western appendages. My honest question—Is this right? Are we being true to Jesus Christ and to His Church in India?

Perhaps an honest reflection will reveal that the Church in India has hardly grown because we have not been contextual enough. The average non-Christian thinks of Jesus Christ as a God of the Westerner. We

have clothed Jesus Christ so beautifully in Western garb, carved the Christian Church into gothic glory and Corinthian columns. We sing our hymns of praise, penitence and intercessions through the bellows of the pipe organ and the piano. We have glittered our altar tables with western laces and some of our Churches are robed in the finery and purple of costliest western linen. We have the old English candle-stick and we sit in comfortable Pews. Please, may we be a little more practical, realistic and look at the whole thing with an open mind. Is there anything Indian in that which has been described? It is no wonder that the non-Christian has no attraction for Christianity because Christ is presented in such western forms and He is a God good enough for the Westerner. There is nothing Indian in our worship and this could well be a reason why non-Christians are not attracted to our worship and to Jesus Christ. It is not the cross that has been the stumbling stone but the Indian Christianity that has been an offence to the Gospel.

Should we not think about this seriously? Should we not try to present Christ in more Indian ways? Should we not be thinking of building our Churches with gopurams and in Indian architecture with the cross of Jesus Christ reigning supreme above? Is Christ not the Lord of Indian Culture? Should we not be thinking of Indian music, Indian instruments, the replacement of the candle-stick by the kuthuvillaku and more simple Indian dress and altar linen. Should we not squat on the floor or stand and worship God or even prostrate and pray. This would be truly Indian. There are no chairs or benches in any Hindu temple, in any Muslim mosque, in a Parsi or Sikh places of worship. Would it not be right to enter the Church without shoes, sandals or chappals. Why are we not more Indian. We don't want to change or think of change!! The first of the Gloria is so literal in the life of the Indian Church—'As it was in the beginning is now and EVER SHALL BE'. We should be more broad minded and open minded and think more seriously about being contextualized. We must wake up! We have been slumbering in the past. We have been rather apathetic and indifferent towards this aspects of our religious life.

We must admit that the Indian Church, some of our pastors and many of our laymen are confused about the issues. Many of us confuse indigenization with Hinduisation. This is ignorance and a lack of right understanding. In our life, worship and witness we can be much more Indian without being Hindu or Muslim. We need to adapt Christianity into our own culture without making it Hindu or Muslim but present Christ in Indian terms. In our confusion we get very emotional and we lose the power to think clearly and argue coherently and logically. I would plead for every Christian to think of making Jesus Christ more suitable to our culture and the people around us so that we could present Jesus Christ in attractive Indian terms. Now Jesus Christ is not presented in a contextual way. It is interesting to note that the Roman Catholic church is moving fast and we are moving at snail's pace. Rev. Father D. S. Amalorpavada of the National Biblical, Catechetical & Liturgical Centre, Bangalore, has made great and rapid

strides of progress in this direction. He is brilliant, theological, Christo-centric and VERY INDIAN. To quote Father Amalopavadass 'Now passing from sensible forms we come to conceptual and spiritual forms: Namely integration in the field of theology, liturgy and spirituality. We cannot say which is the most important, which should have top priority or from where we should start. They are interconnected and therefore we must begin somewhere. Though an Indian theology may be helpful for an Indian liturgy and spirituality it seems that the practical process may be the other way about. A deep quest for and discovery of God (spirituality)—to which Hinduism and Indian religious traditions attach so much importance—culminating in an authentic cultural experience of Him (Liturgy) will facilitate and lead to the evolution of an Indian Christian theology. When once the Indian Christian community can elevate and express themselves in genuine Indian forms of worship, it will be possible to express the same in the language and thought-patterns proper to the Indian genius. Praiseworthy and sporadic efforts have been made in these three domains.'

Reflecting on the concept of contextualization, Kosuke Koyama, the Japanese theologian says 'there has been an alarming misunderstanding . . . that contextualization of theology means simply to take context seriously and adjust theology to fit into it. That would be 'uncritical accommodation' . . . Context must not be viewed as something 'absolute' . . . as a tiger looks at the cage in which he is caged'. Rather, says Koyama, context is 'a dynamic relational concept. . . Authentic contextualization is a prophetic mode of living in the given historical cultural situation. It challenges the context and attempts to make critical theological observations . . . It is neither an easy accommodation nor an easy prophetism, but it is both a serious accommodation and a serious prophetism. It aims at an accommodational prophetism and prophetic accommodation'.

So let us not think that Indianization is Hindusation. This we must bear in mind very clearly.

SUNDAR CLARKE,  
Bishop.

## Health Care in the Context of Self-reliant Development

I. Health is not just a matter of providing hospitals, medical experts, and medicines. Many facilities introduced under governmental or private auspices in developing countries fail to reach the needy sectors. They tend to be appropriated by the groups with social influence, economic power and political pull, by the privileged minorities. Thus, potentially praiseworthy efforts for the good of the 'common man' remain limited to the existing power groups, and the people they are meant to serve are often excluded. Unless ordinary people can be motivated and mobilized to act together and resist the domination of the traditionally powerful, the majority in developing countries will remain at the margin of social services. Problems of health care in developing countries are, therefore, linked with the socio-economic problems of that society and are linked with the power structures which exist in the society.

A number of new experimental programmes and development projects have been initiated by Christian organizations in developing countries. These have received substantial support from donor agencies in developed countries in the West. It has hoped that these programmes would become self-supporting and provide examples of self-reliance and successful participation by the people. Instead, most of these programmes tend to become new institutions, depending almost wholly on larger injections of funds from outside, and gradually developing all the characteristics of the traditional institutions which they were designed to replace. In any form of social organization, we naturally need institutions, but if these become symbols of power and patronage, or instruments for creating a new elite, or an end in themselves to be kept running without regard for the basic objectives for which they were established, we become slaves of institutionalism. Such appears to be the profile of many Christian institutions, both traditional and those which

are so-called, 'experimental'. The basic criterion to judge the validity of an institution is to ask if it is meeting the needs of the society. A medical college or a big hospital has full justification to continue if it serves the less privileged sections of society. But, if it trains young doctors to add to the army of expatriates looking for greener pastures in rich nations, or if the services provided by the hospitals are so expensive as to exclude the poor, then it loses the justification for its existence. The same kind of criteria should be applied to the so-called experimental projects or their evaluation: **Do they meet the needs of the community? Do they promote self-reliant development?**

II. There are four constituent elements of self-reliant development:

- (1) to start from the realities of a given situation;
- (2) to determine priorities in terms of the needs and resources of that society;
- (3) to embark on sustained efforts to mobilize available and potential resources within that society or nation;
- (4) to consider foreign economic links in terms of whether they really serve national priorities.

### Realities of a situation

'Our societies (developing countries) are called "poor". That description is not quite correct. Not everyone in that society is poor. There are some very rich people in these countries. In fact, economic and political power is concentrated in their hands. However, it is true that poverty, and the factors that cause it, represent the basic reality of our societies. If that society is to progress, it must learn to acquire self-confidence within such

conditions of poverty. That is a fundamental condition for self-reliance. Developing countries will be doomed to psychological subservience and feelings of inferiority if they apply imitative norms of rich nations to judge what contributes to national and self-respect. That seems to be the tragedy of many countries of the Third World thus far. Having more things, having 'modern technology', pursuing the path of consumerism and patterns of production and investment related to it, judging progress largely by a material yardstick of per capita consumption of steel, energy, etc., are examples of imitative norms. To appear to be like rich countries seems to be the main objective. That is why we have often misunderstood development to mean being similar to some industrial country, another Japan, another Federal Republic of Germany, another USA, and so on. Under that kind of an approach, we are doomed to 'second-class status' for the foreseeable future.

According to many projections, the gap between developed and developing countries will continue to widen. Over the last two decades, this has been happening. In other words, instead of coming nearer to rich nations, the poor nations (or at least the majority of them) have fallen further behind. If our dignity and self-respect depend upon becoming like rich nations, it is obvious that we will never acquire such a sense of equality, of being someone AS WE ARE. Are we then condemning ourselves to becoming 'NON-PEOPLE' by imposing upon ourselves the norms and values of affluent societies of the West? Much of economic planning appears to have done exactly that. We need, therefore, to struggle for a kind of intellectual liberation, to accept the historical situation in which we are, and to discover our potentialities in that limiting situation, without any feelings of inadequacy with respect to rich nations. That kind of realism is an essential condition of self-reliance.

Sometimes, the term, 'identity' is used to describe this search for self-respect and dignity within the realities of our situation. It is often used by churches in countries of the Third World. It is really a search for recognizing our potentialities and building on them, rather than continuing to depend upon the so-called 'parent' churches in the West. The call to moratorium, given by the All Africa Conference of Churches at Lusaka in 1974, symbolizes this quest.

### Priorities, needs, resources

How do we determine our needs? What do we consider to be our resources, and how are these to be utilized? These are important questions in the process of determining priorities. Needs are not to be judged in terms of the style of living and expectations of materially affluent societies. This has been the practice in a number of developing countries, and has resulted in an imitation of consumerism, or prestige production (big projects, big industries, advanced technology, five-star hotels, Jumbo jets, and so on).

In countries infected by consumerism, the economy is geared to the satisfaction of luxury needs, while the majority of the people struggle to survive under conditions which we would normally classify as submarginal. It means that we ignored our realities when we determined our needs. Obviously then, our strategy for development tends to have an imitative concept of our needs and to seek resources to fulfil them. That means

ignoring our own resources, such as manpower, simple skills, etc., which could more adequately help to meet the basic needs of a poor society. Such distortions have become a part of the experience of development over the last two and a half decades. It would then be fair to conclude that much of the development process in the Third World has not been in line with self-reliance.

### Mobilization of actual and potential resources

If we determine priorities in terms of our needs and resources, then we must make efforts to mobilize the resources that are available, and also try to develop potential resources. There are many simple skills available in any developing country. Instead of building production on the basis of such skills through cottage and small-scale industries, there is a tendency to copy developed nations and to go in for advanced technology and large-scale production. Where cottage industries are promoted, they are linked to foreign demand, such as tourism, or temporary 'fancies' (whims) of buyers in rich nations for this or that handicraft product from poor countries. This is a gross misdirection of productive skills of a developing country. These skills should first and foremost be used to provide essentials for the masses of the people. Instead of that, they are harnessed to the foreign trade sector for the benefit of the already prosperous. An example from Indian conditions would illustrate this tendency. Originally, the production of 'khadi' or hand-spun cloth was propagated by Mahatma Gandhi to utilize the free time and simple skills of the people (available resources) and to meet the basic need for clothing. It was an essential part of self-reliant development that would break the exploitation of foreign cloth and the village money-lender from whom the poor often had to borrow to buy necessary clothing. Today, in free India, khadi has been commercialized, its fundamental purpose forgotten. At the moment, it has a good market in some Western countries and with the high income groups in India. It has failed to relieve the scarcity of clothing which the deprived sections suffer from, and failed to make use of people's skills in meeting that basic need. One can only describe it as a misuse of resources that increases dependence and exploitation.

### Relations with other countries

Self-reliant development does not exclude co-operation with external groups or other nations. But that co-operation has to be in terms of national priorities established on the afore-mentioned principles. Mobilization of internal resources to meet basic needs is the first step. If international co-operation strengthens that process, it would have a place, otherwise it would be subversive of self-reliance. Quite often, foreign aid has been looked upon as an easy way out, a shortcut to development, as if a society could deal with the problem of poverty without sweat and toil and social dislocation. This may be more true of programmes carried on by voluntary organizations than by governments, though, in general, the observation would apply to both types of activity.

III. Priorities and strategies of development have been unduly governed by focusing on the limitations which a developing country has. Even the definition of under-development in traditional economics is given in terms of certain inadequacies, such as scarcity of capital, low man/land ratio, (due to large population), insufficient managerial and administrative skills, lack of efficiency, a

structure of foreign trade that has proved burdensome, and so on. Naturally, the solution was sought in getting resources to overcome these deficiencies. Aid from industrial countries, technical skills and expertise, foreign investment, experience in agriculture and industry, etc., were brought in to fill the gap. To deal with problems of health, it was felt that more hospitals on the lines of 'modern hospitals', more doctors, more medical colleges, in fact, more of what the prosperous societies have, would provide a solution. These efforts have undoubtedly conferred some benefits. But the experience of many developing countries shows that our imitative ways and eagerness to secure help from others, without first building up our own potentialities, has become help that leads to a new kind of helplessness.

The emphasis was on economic growth, a quantitative increase in what we lack. This has resulted in expansion of a questionable kind. For instance, more medical colleges have given more doctors, but we have not asked the important questions: What kind of medical education should be given in our conditions? What should be the motivation of those who are trained? Can some of the traditional skills and systems be utilized?—and so on. In the obsession with quantitative increase, the fundamental question has been pushed to the background, namely, Does this increase deal with problems of poverty and injustice?

Realism requires that a society should be aware of its shortcomings. But realism demands a further step. That society should also be aware of its assets, its potentiality. In order to overcome shortcomings, such as hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, low production, etc., it is necessary to activate whatever points of strength there may be. Unfortunately, this has not been fully recognized in much of development economics. What are the most important assets of a poor country?—its manpower, the people and their skills. But we have often thought of the people only as a burden, as the pressure of population on limited resources. It is true that people represent the burden of needs and consumption. However, the same people are also producers, innovators, and custodians of many potentialities still to be developed. Economic planning should, from the outset, use their abilities, strengthen their potentialities, and teach a sense of social responsibility, so that they would be willing to apply their efforts in the interest of the total community. When India began economic planning in 1951, the number of unemployed were about 3.3 million. In 1974, after two decades of planning, that list had risen to nearly 12 million. Obviously, we have not made the right use of our assets. There has been impressive industrial and agricultural progress in India. In the area of social service, such as education, health, improving the condition of outcasts, etc., there has been a remarkable increase. But the fact that unemployment and underemployment have also risen, points to some basic contradictions in our method of planning and our priorities. That has now been recognized, and the shift since 1971 to 'BANISH POVERTY' (a slogan with which the Congress Party swept the elections) symbolizes the mood. But the mood must become a movement, and be made a reality in economic policies that deal with unemployment. Simultaneously, there has to be an increase in the production of essential goods and services, so that, after getting employment, people will be able to buy the basic necessities of life. Instead of production for profit in response to the demand of high income groups, it is necessary to have production of socially necessary things. That has many implications. It

requires a stoppage of luxury and non-essential production, of curbs on the consumption of high income groups which encourage that kind of production, of regulation on the direction of investment so that it flows into the essential sector, and so on. If a society is not giving priority to mobilization and use of what it has, there is no justification to seek resources from outside. It would only increase dependence and weaken self-reliance.

This applies as much to church-related programmes as to national effort. For instance, we must ask if the church in India has tried to mobilize internally available assets, not only within the community which is called 'Christian', but in the larger community which the church claims to serve. If not, then infusion of resources from outside can only weaken our will and increase the sense of dependency.

IV. In order to mobilize assets, it is essential to develop the will of the community. In practical terms, this may be possible only if the deprived groups, not the privileged, see that the benefits of their efforts are coming to them immediately in the form of goods and services that assure a desirable minimum for life. Economists and planners tend to promise growth and a higher standard of living in the long run. Indian planning projected a doubling of per capita income in 25 years. Figures for per capita income can be deceptive averages. The 'poor' do not necessarily benefit from the increase which tends to be monopolized by privileged sections.

People who are hungry and victims of injustice today should not be expected to wait patiently for 25 years before their condition improves. After more than two decades of planning in India, 40% of the people are living below the poverty line. That is the official estimate. Unofficial estimates have put the percentage as high as 60%. How can we keep saying to this submerged majority that it must wait for another two decades before its condition can improve?

One of the important ways to develop national will for development efforts is that the poor secure immediate benefits from improvement in the economic condition. This would be possible if policies of social justice are followed in a society. In an important way, social justice is integral to self-reliance. When people receive a fair share of social production, they are motivated to contribute to social effort. Instead of the 'rich becoming richer and the poor poorer', as has happened in many developing countries, there has to be a reduction of inequalities, a better sharing of economic, social and political power between the privileged few and the majority.

However, in order to assure a desirable minimum for the many, it becomes necessary to impose a maximum on the consumption of the few privileged groups. There are not enough resources in a developing country to provide all that the rich want and all that the poor need. Since self-reliant development requires the full effort of the majority, restrictions have to be placed on those who 'have'. This is part of social justice.

V. The intention of these comments is to show that self-reliant development concentrates on people. It questions and rejects the conventional description of countries as 'poor'. When we talk about poor countries, we get caught in the trap of national and per capita incomes, rates of growth and quantities. All these are

important, but only in relation to what is happening to people.

When we talk about people and their poverty, we have to ask the fundamental question, Why are these people poor? Most of them are quite hard-working; often more than some of us who are more prosperous. Then why are they poor? An important part of the answer is that certain relationships in society are responsible for their continuing poverty. These are relationships of property, of ownership, of power in various forms. Many of the developing countries have a social system in which some are at the top and some have been the traditional underdogs. To overcome poverty and injustice (which are inherent in such relationships), we have to change the social system. No amount of resources will bring about change. On the contrary, since these will fall into the control of those who have power, they will only increase the hold and dominance of such groups. This is evident from the trends in many developing countries. That is why the new understanding of development emphasizes structural change, the need to change existing power and property relationships. Resources are important. But unless a new pattern of social relationships is established, they will keep the poor in conditions of misery.

A country is not poor. Certain groups of people in that country are poor. Unfortunately, they are the majority in developing countries. The focus of development, since it is on poverty, has to be on these people and their basic needs. This is true in specialized services like medicine and health as well. An expensive and sophisticated medical system, imitative of industrial countries, serves only the higher income groups in developing countries, plus a small section of the poor. The larger section of the poor are excluded. Hence, in deciding the nature of health care in developing countries, this aspect of the question should be kept in mind. Primary or community health care focuses on the people, not only on their health needs, but also on the ability they have and must discover to do something about it.

Health care should be fitted into a framework of self-reliant development. Judged in the light of this, much of the health programme in developing countries is misdirected. The emphasis on primary or community health care is more in line with the demands of self-reliance.

DR. SAMUEL, L. PARMAR,  
*Courtesy: CONTACT—32.*

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## Seminar on 'Christian Ecumenism'

The recently established 'Karnataka Theological Research Institute' (KATHRI) conducted its first seminar on the 13th and 14th December 1976 at the Karnataka Theological College, Mangalore. The organizers felt that pastors and laymen working in the CSI have little knowledge of what other Christian groups outside the official church actually believe and do. Thus they launched a series of seminars studying the particular faiths of recognized sister churches and of Christian groups normally labelled as sects or heretic movements. The purpose of these seminars is to provide information and opportunity of sharing our controversial Christian convictions for the sake of a better understanding and of overcoming prejudices or even hostility based on the lack of acquaintance with our Christian brethren. Thus the motive behind is not an abstract idea of ecumenism but the daily experience of our separation from other Christians, which badly effects our search for Christian identity as well as our mission in a non-Christian setting. Due to this object of the seminar KATHRI does not invite theologians from the official Church to explain what other Christian groups believe and do, but asks representatives of the different churches and 'sects' to present their own interpretation of the Bible and Christian doctrines.

The first seminar which was attended by 42 pastors and laymen of the Karnataka area dealt with the faith of the United Pentecostal Church and of the Jehovah's Witnesses. After introductory talks by the Directors of KATHRI setting the scope of the seminar Pastor Bethuel Salins from the Mangalore Zion Hall gave an account of his personal experience of conversion and of his baptism in the name of Jesus. He strongly hold the view that there is no God but Jesus. To him and

his 'United Pentecostal Church' the Jehovah of the OT is the Jesus of the NT.

As expected the following discussion centered around the doctrine of Trinity. Since the argument came back again and again to the interpretation of Biblical passages it was good to have a New Testament scholar, Dr. F. Muliyl, with us who dealt elaborately on the theme 'The Biblical Basis of the Doctrine of Trinity'. On the basis of this the seminar was able to proceed to the Dialogue session raising the question: What has the United Pentecostal Church to say to us and what have we to say to them? If we try to sum up the result of this dialogue, we can put it this way: The participants fully appreciated the emphasis on Jesus being God, but at the same time they strongly stressed the Biblical view of God as the three distinct eternal beings in one Godhead.

The second day of the seminar was devoted to the study of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The papers presented by the two full-time workers of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Mangalore made it clear that the crucial theological issue is the divinity of Jesus Christ. The Jehovah's Witnesses are unable to consider Christ equal to Jehovah God. To them the claim of Christ's equality with God makes it impossible to give full justice to the glorification and vindication of Jehovah.

In opposition to this the participants pointed to the dangers of Arian heresy which denies that God is fully incarnate in Jesus Christ. The debate was hot since nobody was ready to make a compromise in truth. There was agreement that it is impossible to seek unity

on the expense of truth. Nobody wanted to level down the differences for the sake of a shallow peace or a cheap ecumenism. But the more the seminar came to a close the more the participants realized that our Christian disunity not only separates us from each other but also from our Lord. We discovered in ourselves the temptation to use the Word of God as proof texts for our own convictions. It is the temptation of misusing the Bible as a weapon to fight each other. Self-critically the participants became aware of our tendency to self-righteousness making our denominational interpretation of the Bible rather than the Holy Spirit the final judge of Christian truth.

In consequence of this the participants felt the need to have another discussion on how we make use of the Bible. KATHRI along with the representatives of the different Christian groups were asked to continue the dialogue thus started. Without drawing a clear cut distinction to the ecumenical movement the participants agreed that the objects of a seminar like this is not to popularize 'Geneva theology' but to search for more Christian unity on the local level for the sake of a truer witness of our Christian faith. This is also ecumenism, 'grass root ecumenism' if you want.

S. ANANDA KUMAR  
*Joachim Wietzke*

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## CASA at a Turning Point

**Turning Point**—a change in direction or alteration of course—implies re-evaluation or reassessment and a commitment to the new direction which is taken. Such an alteration of course is always fraught with possibilities of great challenges to be met, great obstacles to be overcome and great achievements to be made. CASA is today at such a turning point.

A variety of questions faces the new organisation as it sets out to establish policies and priorities appropriate to the task at hand. Some of the areas of primary concern are:

(a) **Definition of development:** How do we define 'development' and 'social justice'? How are these terms to be the guidelines for the new thrust of CASA?

(b) **From relief to development:** How can CASA move from relief to development, i.e., to change programmes established on a relief basis (and designed to carry out relief work) into programmes of people's participation and socio-economic change for the good of the future of the whole community? How can staff trained and skilled in relief work be re-trained and re-oriented in order to be effectively useful as we face the development task ahead?

(c) **Food importation:** Should CASA continue to be a channel for foreign food? To what extent does the utilisation of food blind the organisation to the greater tasks ahead, particularly with reference to the structural change which food alone cannot bring about? If food is to be utilised, should it be imported or purchased locally? In lieu of food, what other resources might be used, and how, to better achieve the objectives we articulate?

(d) **Clearing and forwarding activities:** How long should CASA continue to be the primary importing agency for medical, agricultural and emergency supplies and equipment? To what extent does this task

divert attention and concern away from the primary tasks in the fields of emergency reaction and development? Is there a practical alternative to this long-standing practice?

(e) **Church relations:** If a CASA is to be truly an AUXILIARY of the CHURCH—what is to be CASA's relationship with the Indian Church, and what is to be their relationship to the development process? How best can CASA give witness to Christian concerns for suffering people? How best can CASA assist the Church in a programme of ACTION in this regard?

(f) **Financial self-reliance:** How is CASA as an organisation to survive financially in the coming years? For more than a quarter century CASA has relied primarily upon assistance from Churches overseas. How long will it be practical for CASA to rely on outside assistance for administration as well as programme support? Is the time not ripe for CASA to undertake seriously major fund-raising campaigns in India? How long can CASA stand as an Indian agency when its very life-blood is provided by non-Indian donors? Can churches, organisations and individuals in India be inspired to share CASA's commitment to development with social justice, and can they be relied upon for financial support?

As CASA grapples with these very complex and frustrating questions, it holds its future in its hands. The decisions taken and the commitments made will determine whether the course taken at this 'turning point' was in the right direction. Over the next few months, CASA proposes to hold three regional seminars with church leaders, development experts and grassroots workers, to discuss these questions and related issues. In January of 1977, a national consultation will be held to assist CASA in planning its programmes and priorities for the future. May those familiar with CASA, and committed to development, join us at this time of change and growth—at this TURNING POINT.

P. C. JOSEPH,  
(Courtesy: 'CASA—1976').

# Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Order for Women in the Church of South India, January 2nd, 1977

'An unforgettable experience' was the phrase on the lips of many of the Sisters of the Church of South India as they left for their homes on the night of January 3rd, 1977. We had been together for seven days in Vishranthi Nilayam, our Mother House in Bangalore to hold our biennial retreat and conference and to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of our Order. The Order was inaugurated on Whit Sunday, June 1st, 1952, but the cost of bringing us together twice in the same year is so great, and also we wanted our Warden, who is retiring in March and returning to England, to be with us, so we decided to celebrate our Silver Jubilee on January 2nd. To our great joy, Sister Carol Graham, one of the founding members, and more than a mother to many of us, was able to come over from England and be with us, too, and with her, Sister Kathleen Freeman, one of the original twenty-seven sisters to be commissioned at the inauguration of the Order.

Nearly sixty of us, most of us in service, some retired, gathered on December 28th for an opening service of praise led by Sister Carol. That night Rev. Bill Harris, our Warden, began a two-day silent retreat for us, with addresses on Romans, chapters 5-8. It was a time of deep refreshment for many of us who were weary. Our Warden challenged us to enter more fully into the inheritance that is ours in Christ: acceptance by God just as we are, and not because of our efforts to be good; freedom from sin, enabling us to fight against it in ourselves and in the world; and freedom from the law to serve in the new life of the Spirit as children of God. While we relaxed in the silence, for recreation we all joined in making paper flower garland for the Jubilee celebrations. It was suggested that we praise God in the silence of our hearts as we did this. Many said what a unique and enriching experience this was.

The next two days we had with us Mrs. Jeanne Harper, one of the leaders of the Charismatic Movement in England, and Joyce Scott (USA), one of its leaders in India. Jeanne sings beautifully, and brought her guitar and led us in a lot of singing. Between the songs she spoke to us, mainly from her own personal experience. Again, fittingly, it was a message of the freedom which is ours in Christ through the working of the Holy Spirit of God in our lives. She also laid great stress on the importance of being open with one another and sharing, giving God the opportunity to work wonders. She and Joyce led us in sessions of praise, penitence and intercession. Linking with what our Warden had said about being freed from sin to fight it, Jeanne also spoke of spiritual warfare, and the victory that is ours for the taking over all that opposes God and His purposes. She and Joyce gave of themselves in helping a number of us through the laying on of hands and prayer to open ourselves to the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of God to heal and renew us.

On the first morning Bishop Gill led us in the Covenant Service to start the new year, and in the afternoon we began preparing and decorating Vishranthi Nilayam buildings and compound for the celebrations the next day. Some sisters had put in a lot of work at home, and made the dining room and verandah gay with colourful bunting. The Chapel was beautifully done with a vine motif and a great silver and blue 'GLORY TO GOD'. Others decorated the drive, and fairy lights were put up in the trees. Over the space for the public meeting the sisters' 'garlands of praise' draped their blue and white flowers, and even bees arrived to see if there was honey in them. A busy and skilful group of sisters set up a fine exhibition of 'Sisters at Work' in the common room. We all worked till late in the night, but we felt only joy and expectancy.

The 2nd January dawned, and we all dashed through our Jubilee breakfast, and arrived at St. Mark's cathedral by 7.30, where we lined up in order of seniority for the procession. It was a wonderful service of praise and thanksgiving. Sister Carol preached, and sisters read the lessons, gave the kiss of peace to the congregation, and carried the elements. At the heart of the service was the commissioning of a new sister, Sukumari Jattanna of South Karnataka diocese. Bishop Furtado received and commissioned her. She made her promises in a clear ringing tone, and the radiance of her commitment was a challenge to each of us, and surely to all who were present. Sister Kathleen Freeman led special intercessions and thanksgiving for the Order, and Bishop Solomon celebrated, reading out the names of our sisters who have died so that we might remember our communion with them. Tears of ecstasy mingled with our praise, and our experience of God's goodness and love. The congregation of St. Mark's served us coffee after the service, and we enjoyed meeting them all.

And so back to Vishranthi to entertain the many friends who came to us. At noon we had a Jubilee Thank-Offering Service in the Chapel, led by our Warden, when we processed, and each sister offered twenty-five gifts. Some of our friends and visitors also made special offerings, and gifts had come from a number of sisters living in retirement in England, too. We sang and praised the Lord with great joy. Further jubilation followed as we all next processed out to the site of our old chapel, transformed with pot plants of every description into a sunken 'Garden of Praise'. Bishop Karl said a prayer of blessing, then Sister Carol officially opened it. The sisters surrounding it sang more praises, and then we all walked in it. To many of us it had been the scene of memorable services, retreats, celebrations, and the place where we had prayed and praised and struggled and repented personally as well as joined in the daily prayers for the Order, the whole CSI, and the world at large through so many years of our pilgrimage.

Soon it would be a flourishing garden with the roses and bouganvillias and climbing plants which the Order is giving as a Jubilee gift, and a place of quiet and peace which those who stay in Vishranthi can enjoy.

Miss Vethamutthu and her helpers gave us a marvellous biriyani Jubilee Lunch, and at 2-30 we opened the sale of all the thanksgiving articles. It brought us in over Rs. 1,000 and we received around Rs. 3,000 in cash donations. More praise to God for His goodness.

At 3-30 there was the Silver Jubilee public meeting held in the space between the Chapel and the dining room under the 'garlands of praise'. Bishop Solomon was in the chair. We were sorry that owing to illness neither our Moderator nor Mrs. Gopal Ratnam our Synod Secretary were able to be with us as we had hoped. The meeting opened with an act of celebration and praise by all the sisters, who sat facing the audience under the platform. We had been practising hard for days. It consisted of readings by the Warden and sisters of gospel passages, the Magnificat and the 103rd Psalm, interspersed with verses and rounds sung by the sisters. 'Soli Deo Gloria' and 'Glory, laud and honour' were the special ones. It ended with prayers of thanksgiving in each of the four regional languages as well as in English. Bishop Solomon, Bishop Karl, Sister Carol, Sister Kathleen Freeman, Mrs. Doraiswamy the president of the Women's Fellowship, and Mother Elizabeth, fraternal delegate from the Lutheran Church, all spoke. Greetings and congratulations had been received from all corners of the globe, and were read out, and a special Silver Jubilee Brochure was released. Tea was served by the sisters during the meeting. Many friends stayed to supper with us, and slides of

the work of some of the sisters were shown afterwards in the common room. We went to bed tired, but exceedingly glad for all that God has done for us, and looking forward with great expectancy and faith to the future, rejoicing in the encouragement and prayers of our friends in India and all over the world.

Our last day began with prayer and quiet in the Chapel, then the choosing of our officers and regional leaders. We are delighted to have Sister Jane Moses and the Rev. Sister Betty Paul as our Elder Sisters for the next two year period. On the business side Sister Joyce Woollard will be our Treasurer and Sister Celia Barber our Secretary. The regional leaders are Sister Beatrice Daniel (Tamil Nadu), Sister Victoria Peter (Karnataka), Sister Rajammal Jeyamani (Andhra) and Sister Susie Oomen (Kerala). We were in conference for the rest of the morning, and closed our time together after lunch with a celebration of the Liturgy at which the induction of the office-bearers took place, and we all re-dedicated ourselves and renewed our promises together. We prayed 'Endue us with Thy grace that we may be filled with the strength and gentleness of Christ. Sustain us amidst all trials and difficulties. Give us a right judgement in all things; bestow upon us the grace of perseverance, and enable us by word and deed to manifest the Spirit of our Lord...' Our Jubilee celebration has given us a new sense of God's goodness and faithfulness through which alone this prayer can be answered, and also a renewed consciousness of the friendship and support of so many without whose goodwill and upholding our live and work would be the poorer. Praise be to God! Praise be to God!

CELIA BARBER.

## MISSIONARY WANTED

A Dedicated Missionary with Family is wanted to work in Mela-Seithalai Pastorate, Tirunelveli North Church Council area of the Tirunelveli Diocese, Church of South India. Applications will be received till the end of March, 1977 with Testimonials regarding age, qualification and experience etc., to the following address.

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Abundance.

But we are sleeping; complacent; striving to be the  
privileged,  
Gandhiji put us on the great trek of total freedom.  
But what is our condition now?  
Several are in prison:—others hungry, defeated—you  
and I?

Khadi, Village Industries—yes—but we have betrayed  
Kumarappa.

Much is being done for the 'Harijans'—sacred word.  
But they are 'outcasts' still;  
We have mother as our Prime Minister;  
We give a token tribute annually to 'Stree-Sakti'  
But are our wives and mothers queens of the home?  
Workers are receiving comparatively good salaries;  
But do they care for hungering labourers in the fields;

In each Constructive Programme we have gone  
professional.

• And there is no health in us'

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Is there one true Basic Education School today?  
Can't we, together, produce at least one ideal Basic  
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We talk easily to them about it—but we don't produce;  
In all fields there is some progress.

For example, we do 'respect the sincere truth-seeker'  
Often with inter-religious groups: a verbal dialogue goes  
on

But this is far from Gandhiji, Ghaffar Khan and CFA  
All too much we have lost our zest for loving, selfless  
service.

We have become too much of the 'Bureaucracy';  
We betray our Master—are not true disciples.  
Jesus once said to his disciples. 'You will go beyond  
me'!

Yes, they 'turned the world upside down'—did they go  
beyond?

Jesus said, 'There is much more to say; the Holy Spirit  
will guide you'. But are Christians on pilgrimage—or we?

In our gramdan work we call villagers to noble goals;  
But where is there an establishment or 'Mandal'  
That practices what we preach?  
As Jesus said to the Pharisees and Scribes of his day,  
'You are hypocrites'

I repeat, 'these are days of Emergency'  
I am not talking of Government-declared—'Emergency.'  
I talk of the Emergency of the Hungry.  
Is there any greater?  
That should be our concern:  
Are we doing enough about it?

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[FEBRUARY 1977]

# News from the Diocese

## MADRAS DIOCESE

### Service to the flood victims

Toward the end of last year Madras city and its neighbourhood had floods and many people were rendered homeless, stranded and hungry. The Diocese went into immediate action providing 8 centres for shelter, feeding about 20,000 people and distributing clothes and food. An interesting feature is that the Church went into action first, before the State could set up committees and raise money, the Church was on the spot of need. There is no virtue, it is a part of our obligation. Plans are a foot for rehabilitating the flood damaged homes, schools and churches.

### New patterns of ministry

Thinking in terms of leadership and with a view to decentralizing the work more and more, full-time directors have been appointed so that ministries could be specialized and carried out with greater efficiency. We now have 4 full-time directors for Evangelism, communication and development, hostels and youth. We are in the process of appointing three more full-time directors. One each for spiritual concerns, women's work, and for social concerns. We also have a director for the Industrial work in the city and it is possible that we will have a director for rural development.

### Proposals for the future

We intend to inaugurate a 5 year plan and a 5 point programme. We must set a target and work towards that target. The bishop, every presbyter, every congregation and every member of the church should know about the 5 year plan and the 5 point programme. Within the next 5 years we will make a concentrated effort to the following 5 points: 1. Spiritual renewal 2. Evangelism 3. Social Concerns 4. Agricultural farming 5. Strengthening the existing institutions.

SUNDAR CLARKE,  
Bishop.

## TIRUNELVELI DIOCESE

### Voluntary Gospel Workers' Training Programme

Hundred and eighty persons were given useful training under the Voluntary Gospel Workers' Training Programme organised by the Diocese during 9th to the 12th December.

### 128th Anniversary issue of 'Narpothagam'

The February 1976 of *Narpothagam* will be the 128th anniversary special number. The motto of *Narpothagam* is 'The eyes of your understanding being enlightened' (Ephesians 1:18).

### Nazareth Pastorate—Good News Camp Ministry at Vanaramutti

Nazareth pastorate has been taking steps to propagate the gospel to the people around Vanaramutti, near Vagaikulam for about two years. Through the dedicated work of Mr. Samuel and inspired by the gospel camps organised by the pastorate many of the local people repented of their sins. As a result 16 elders and 2 children were baptised by the Bishop on 5th December 1976.

### New tradition for choosing Pastorate Committee members

In the Ambai Pastorate five members had to be elected for the committee, but about a month before the election was to be held, the voters themselves selected five persons among them and also sent a promise in writing to the pastorate chairman that no one will oppose them. The five persons were elected unopposed.

NARPOTHAGAM,  
January, 1977.

## Letter to the Editor

### NOTHING TO REPORT

In the January '77 issue of *The South India Churchman* the Rev. O. Sivaramaiya has bemoaned that of the 18 Dioceses only six had sent in news for publication in the November '76 issue. In the January '77 issue the six have dwindled to two!

As Rev. Sivaramaiya says, it is not that there is anything happening in our Dioceses. Some of them are feverishly active round the clock! But many of these activities are perhaps 'unspeakable', and certainly not

reportable in *Churchman*. Endless intrigues and character assassinations going on in some of them find their way into the yellow press. Litigations, which seem to consume all the time of some of our Bishops, may be found reported in the Law Journals of the country. These Dioceses—alas—seem to be engaged in doing pretty little that will benefit their own members, and much less that will inspire the other Dioceses, if reported in *The South India Churchman*.

D. S. GEORGE MULLER,  
Sawyerpuram.

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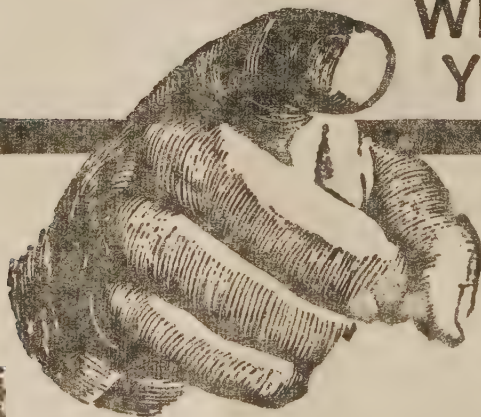
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## NOTICES

### WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

March 4, 1977

World Day of Prayer falls on March 4, 1977. Copies of the Programme can be had as below:

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- Telugu**  
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- Santhali**  
Mr. P. Baskey, Mission House,  
P.O. Talahari, Dist. Santhal-Parganas (WB).
- Boro**  
Mrs. S. Basumati, Mahakalguri Mission School,  
P.O. Santalpur, Dist. Jalpaiguri (WB).
- Assamese**  
Miss Norun Sengma,  
Pan Bazaar, Gauhati (Assam).
- Malayalam**  
Mrs. K. K. George,  
C.L.S., Tiruvalla (Kerala).

- Kanarese**  
Rev. H. M. Duke, K.C.C.,  
2-B Mission Road, Bangalore (Karnataka).
- Oriya**  
Miss S. Bahera, Christian Hospital,  
P.O. Berhampur, District Ganjam (Orissa).
- Marathi**  
Miss M. Damle, Mission Girls' School,  
Mecosabagh, Nagpur (Maharashtra).
- Gujarati**  
Miss L. Sewell, Christi Sahitya Bhandar,  
Dharampur Road, Bulsar (Gujarat).
- Nepali**  
Dr. P. Pradhan,  
Gandhi Road, Darjeeling (WB).

PROJECTS receiving help are the following:

- Prime Minister's Relief Fund Rs. 1,000
- St. John's Women's Co-opt. Society,  
St. John's Church, Bangalore  
(Sewing Machines) Rs. 1,500
- Madak: Home for Aged Rs. 1,000

OFFERINGS may please be sent to the Treasurer:  
Mrs. K. K. George, C.L.S., Tiruvalla (Kerala)

(Sd.) IRENE SANT-MASIH  
Chairman,  
World Day of Prayer.

Adams Girls' College,  
Almora, U.P. 263 602.